



Understanding opportunities for U.S. veterans

Employers: Unlock the benefits veterans bring to the workforce

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Veterans make for skilled and dedicated employees.

Veterans are a valuable addition to the workplace, bringing unique skills and life experiences to the companies that hire them. Despite this, veteran employment challenges persist, with many members of this community facing underemployment.

The **2023 Veteran Opportunity Report** exists to help shine a light on veterans, so employers can make more informed decisions about hiring and promoting them.

Let's look at the facts:



Skills

61% of veterans' first jobs are in high-skill roles, and eight of LinkedIn's top 10 most in-demand skills are top veteran skills.



Experience

Veterans have nearly 2x more work experience than nonveterans and have leadership as a top skill.



Education

Veterans are 3x more likely to have a graduate degree than nonveterans, and 60.5% of veterans attain a bachelor's degree or higher.



Retention rates

Veterans are 27% less likely than nonveterans to leave their first job within 6 months.

Why are veteran hires still seen as a flight risk?

The common belief that 50% of veterans leave their first civilian job within six months is a prevailing one. So, is there any validity to this lingering claim?

*No. In fact, LinkedIn insights reveal that **veterans are 27% less likely than nonveterans to leave their first job within 6 months.***

15.6%

of nonveteran new graduates leave their first job within six months

11.5%

of veterans leave their first job within six months.



Read the report



Change the narrative to bridge the gap.

If you've never served in the military, understanding how military experience translates to the workforce can be confusing. This gap in understanding is called the veteran-civilian divide, and it makes it harder for veterans to connect with opportunity, while holding companies back from tapping into this diverse and highly skilled talent pool.

As an employer, you can help bridge the veteran-civilian divide and welcome more veterans into your workforce by taking a few important steps:

- 1 Define your strategy.** Be intentional about veteran hiring by developing initiatives and strategies around it. Educate hiring managers on the value of hiring veterans, share best practices, and set and track toward veteran recruitment goals. The LinkedIn Learning course "[Recruiting Veterans](#)" is a good place to start as you build out your strategy.
- 2 Put skills first.** Veterans may not have as much experience in the civilian workforce as other candidates, but that doesn't mean they're not equally qualified. Look beyond the names of previous employers and focus on skills. If you're unsure what skills are required for military roles, consider asking a veteran peer to walk you through the candidate's resume. Alternatively, give candidates a chance to demonstrate their skills in a real-world setting.
- 3 Challenge stereotypes.** Myths and stereotypes about veterans can lead to un-inclusive hiring practices, unwelcoming company cultures, and biased promotion decisions. Use the 2023 Veteran Opportunity Report and other insights into the military community to educate yourself and your team, so you can challenge stereotypes when you see them.
- 4 Give veterans a seat at the table.** Whenever possible, give employees with military experience the opportunity to help steer your company's initiatives around veterans. This might include participating in interview panels and helping to co-create onboarding resources. In the longer term, explore establishing a veteran-focused employee resource group (ERG) to help employees with military experience find community and advocate for the support and resources they need to thrive at your company.

Why are veterans underrepresented in senior positions?

Despite having leadership as a top skill and nearly 2x more work experience than nonveterans, **veterans are half as likely to reach director or vice president leadership roles in the civilian workforce.**

When veterans do reach these senior positions, however, they tend to get there with 1 year less non-military work experience than their nonveteran counterparts for both roles. This suggests that professional military work experience is undervalued in the civilian workforce — and that many employers are not taking full advantage of veterans' skills.

Conclusion

Veteran underemployment hurts everyone involved. Companies that invest in hiring and nurturing veteran talent can make the most of the rich skills, diverse life experience, and unique perspectives that this community brings. Adopting a skills-first approach is a key first step, helping you move away from outdated hiring practices and toward a more equitable future for the workforce as a whole. **Download the full 2023 Veteran Opportunity Report for more insights into the veteran talent pool.**

Read the report

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